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(WASHINGTON, DC) -- Today, Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) voted to pass H.R. 1773, the Safe American Roads Act. This legislation places restrictions on the Department of Transportation's (DOT) proposed pilot program that enables Mexican trucks to travel beyond the current border zones. The bill passed the House with a bipartisan vote after receiving a unanimous vote of passage through the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, of which Carnahan is a member.

Currently, trucks entering the United States from Mexico are restricted to limited border zones, where they unload their cargo for transport by American trucks. Under the DOT's proposed pilot program, 100 Mexico-domiciled trucking companies would be allowed to drive into the heartland of the United States.

"I have serious concerns that the trucking standards set forth by the Mexican government are not as consistent or tough as the regulations placed upon the American trucking industry," Carnahan said. "I am proud to support and cosponsor H.R. 1773 to ensure that the safety of our nation's highways are not compromised."

Mexico does not provide strict oversight of trucking regulatory standards, such as hours of service, drug testing and criminal background checks for drivers hauling hazardous materials, putting public safety in question. The lack of strict Mexican carrier regulations may also increase the probability of drug trafficking and illegal immigration.

The Safe American Roads Act would place a check on the DOT's pilot program, requiring the implementation of additional safety measures, the designation of the program's timeframe and termination date, and public notification and comment about the details of the program before it begins. The bill also prohibits the pilot program from beginning until U.S. motor carrier companies are allowed to initiate comparable operations in Mexico.